لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE

REVIEW

OF RELIGIONS

KHILAFAT LIBRARY

FATH, 1359—DECEMBER, 1980

EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

The Ahmadiyya Movement

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious Philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his fore-fathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement, to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, Peace and blessings be upon him, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences for their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good-will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brother-hood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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The Review of Religions

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This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions. Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

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The Fifteenth Century of Hijra

The Century of the Triumph of Islam

The end of the thirteenth century Hijra could be called the time of gloom for the Muslims all over the world. By then they had lost all their past glory and a large majority of them lived under the stifling influence of colonial domination. The degeneration that had set in among them was not only economic, political and social but also spiritual. Complete darkness prevailed over the world of Islam. The Promised Messiah Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian has depicted the picture of that era in the following words:

"The time is very dark in which we live. Corruption has set in————in men's faith as well as their actions. A swift and evil wind blows on all sides spreading error and transgression. What is called faith amounts to words repeated in a mechanical fashion and what are called good works amount to a few rites, to some extravagant practises or hypocritical activities. True piety and virtue have been forgotten. The philosophy and science of this age run counter to spiritual as-

pirations. The influence they exert is bad to an extreme and conducive to spiritual blindness. They stimulate thoughts dangerous and impluses satanic .....The Being and Existence of God are not serious propositions with them. A great many are anti-religious, steeped in naturalistic thinking and born and bred as Muslims they become hostile to religion".

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(Victory of Islam page 2)

Among many deplorable theories that were invented by the Muslims themselves were the theory of the abrogation of some of the verses of the Holy Quran, the apologetic interpretation of the Holy Quran concerning its commandments regarding Purdah, Jehad etc. and the concept of a Mahdi whose mission was, according to them, to kill and destroy.

The closing of thirteen century Hijra also witnessed a strom of opposition to Islam from Christians, Hindus and other faiths. They were jubilant that the days of Islam were numbered. They even boasted the victory of their faiths in the fourteenth century Hijra. So much so that a bigoted Christian Missionary boasted that the cross will soon be nailed to the Holy Kaaba.

It was in this bleak and gloomy period that God Almighty raised Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement just at the beginning of the fourteenth century Hijra. His advent took place in fulfilment of a great prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Holy Prophet had said :

> "God will continue to raise among this *Umma* in the beginning of each century a man who would teach them the spirit of Islam and thus, in a manner renew the days of the Prophet." (Abu Dawood)

In accordance with this prophecy the beginning of each Islamic century witnessed the advent of such holy people who came to regenerate Islam and to reform the Muslims. Fourteenth century Hijra could not have been an exception to it. The

Promised One appeared in Qadian in 1889, just at the beginning of fourteenth century Hijra. His advent was the need of the hour. People awaited the descent of Jesus from the Heavens which actually meant that a person like unto Jesus will appear whose mission it will be to put an axe to all evil innovations that had crept among Muslims and to prove by strong arguments the supremacy of the teachings of Islam over all other faiths.

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He declared his divine mission in 1889, just at the beginning of the fourteenth century Hijra. With his declaration that Jesus did not die on the cross, he checked successfully the onslaught of Christianity and turned the tide. He disproved the principal Christian doctrines of the Death on the Cross and Ressurection from the New Testament itself. The Christians were and still are dumb-founded. They could not come out to defend these basic doctrines of theirs and are unable to do so even today. In 1978 the Ahmadiyya Movement of Great Britian held an International Conference on the "Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross" which was addressed not only by Muslim scholars but Christians as well. The Present Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad invited the Christians all over the world to a dialogue on the subject but so far they have dodged the invitation and have not had even the courage to nominate a committee to open the dialogue with the Ahmadis. The cross has indeed been broken. No Christian Missionary can now stand before an Ahmadi. Christianity is now on the retreat not only in the East but also in the West.

He showed hundreds of thousands of signs. These signs related to heavenly bodies, to the atmosphere of the earth, to friends and foes, to governments and their subjects. Through these powerful signs he was able to establish the supremacy of Islam over all other faiths. These signs were shown to prove the existence of God and also to prove that He still establishes His communion with seekers after truth.

God had promised through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, that in the later days the Messiah and Mahdi would appear who would rejuvenate Islam and bring back its original glory to the world. Belief in one God is the central teaching of Islam. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad r-affirmed the Oneness of God with strong arguments. He refuted the *Shirk* that Jesus also created birds and quickened the dead to life. These were attributes of God and its reference to any human being was *shirk*.

The coming of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a great event. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessing be on him, sent him his blessings. The Holy Prophet stressed the coming of the Messiah more than the coming of anyone else. He was the awaited reformer of all religions. Fourteenth century Hijra is blessed as it gave us the great champion of Islam. It was in this century that we saw the sowing of the seed of the future victories and final triumph of Islam. The die has now been cast. The Glory of Islam has been made manifest. Islam will now march onward and will eventually emerge victorious. Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the Present Head of the Movement has predicted that the fifteenth century Hijra will be the century of the triumph of Islam.

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O fifteenth century of Islam! we welcome you, with great joy and open heart as it is destined that before you come to an end you would have witnessed that Islam had been triumphant all over the world and that *Tawhid* and *Risalat* of Muhammad had been firmly established.

Mosque in Spain

We were shocked and dismayed to read the Editorial comments of "Pakistan Times" of November 16, 1980, about the proposed Ahmadiyya Mosque being built in Spain. It should have been a matter of great satisfaction and joy for the Editor of Pakistan Times as a Pakistani Muslim to have had the honour and privilage of the construction of a mosque in Spain after a lapse of more than five hundred years as the Ahmadiyya Movement has its roots in Pakistan and is a Pakistani based Jamaat.

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The editorial has objected to its being called a "Mosque". We do not understand the purport of the objection. A building constructed solely for the worship of one God and for pronouncing five times a day the messengership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, a building facing the Holy Kaaba at Mecca with a Mihrab and minarets and having the inscription of the verses of the Holy Quran on its walls could only be called a mosque. If not, then what name would you give it? Call a rose by any name it is a rose.

In the editorial the same old false charges have been repeated which have been rebutted time and again by the Ahmadiyya Movement that the Ahmadiyya Movement had the backing of the British. It is true that the Founder of the Movement expressed his loyalty and praised the British repeatedly in his books. This he did in obedience to the commandment of Allah that one should render complete obedience to the Government of the time. He has said in one of his books, "I do not flatter the government as some ignorant ones imagine because I desire a return from the Government. On the contrary I consider it just and a duty on account of my faith

to express gratitude to the government."

(Tableegh Risalat Vol. X. p. 123)

He praised the British in obedience to the direction of the Holy Prophet, peace of Allah be upon him, that he who is not grateful to man is not grateful to Allah. To call a justice-loving government a just government is an Islamic quality.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was not alone in the praise of the British. Most of the Muslim Scholars and divines of the time described the British government as blessings of Allah. We set out below some of the declarations made by them.

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Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Sahib of Batala who was one of the leading ulemas and leaders of Ahle Hadees, wrote :

> "It is not permissible for Muslim subjects to fight, or to help with men and money those who fight against a government, whether Christian, or Jewish, or of some other faith, under whom the Muslims carry out their religious duties and obligations freely. For the Muslims of India it is forbidden to oppose or rebel against the British government." (Ishaaus Sunnah Vol ; VI No. 10)

He has also stated :

> "Brethern, this is not the time of the sword ; at this time it has become necessary to use the pen in place of the sword." (Ishaatus Sunnah Vol. VI No. 12)

Hazrat Syed Ahmad Sahib of Brelli declared :

> "Our true purpose is the propagation of the Unity of God and the revival of the pratice of the Chief of the Prophets, and that we carry out without hinderance in this country. Then why should we fight the British government and shed the blood of both sides contrary to the principles of our religion."
>
> (Biography of Hazrat Syed Ahmad Sahib)

An-Nadwa, the organ of the Nadwatul Ulama wrote :

> "The true purpose of this institute of learning is to pro-

duce clear-minded divines and it is the duty of such divines that they should be familiar with the blessings of the government and should propagate loyalty to the government in this country."

(An Nadwa, vol. V July 1908)

It is against this background that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movemet expressed his gratitude to the British government. He set forth his reasons thus :

"The government has provided freedom for every people to propagate their religion and thus the people have gained the oppurtunity to investigate and reflect upon the principles of each religion and the argument in support of them.....that is the reason that we mention the beneficence of the British Government repeatedly in our writings and speeches." (Roodad Jalsa Doa)

Another matter worthy of note is that the British Government spent millions of pounds in an effort to establish Christianity in its colonial possessions. They published vast literature and trained thousands of missionaries for the purpose of the conversion of the colonies to Christianity. Does it stand to reason that on the one hand an intellegent Government should carry on such a tremondous effort for the propagation of its religion and on the other hand should put up a person who applied the axe to the roots of Christianity? How is it that the British government sponsared a Muslim to declare the death of their God?

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The Founder of the Movement was opposed by all the Christian missionaries so much so that some of them brought false accusation against him and dragged him in the courts. If they knew that he was one of their own men why should they have opposed him so strenously?

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement was the person who blocked the advance of Christianity, who proved the death of the god of the Christians, who established the truth of the

Holy Quran in contrast with the Bible, whose missionaries are busy demolishing Christian citadels around the globe and who invited the Queen of Great Britian, who was the greatest sovereign of her age, to give up Christianity and to accept Islam. Can any reasonable person accept that one who had been put up, as alleged by his opponents by a Christian Government to uproot Islam, should stand up and invite the mighteist sovereign of his time, to accept Islam?

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The editor of "Pakistan Times" is very well acquainted with the Ahmadiyya Movement as his childhood and early life was spent in Qadian. Can he honestly testify that during the period of his stay at Qadian the Ahmadis had any secret or open links with the British government? Can he advance a single piece of evidence that the Ahmadiyya Movement had accepted any financial support from the British government? If the answer is in the negative then he should fear Allah who knows everything and to whom he is answerable.

The Ahmadiyya Movement has, by the grace of God, been able to build mosques all over the world. It is strange that the Christians should conspire to defeat Islam by not only allowing the Ahmadis to build mosques in their citadels but also to let them pronounce from these mosques five times a day the Unity of God and the messangership of Muhammad, peace of Allah be on him? Does the editor of Pakistan imes wants us to believe that the Christians have in their heart of heart accepted the Unity of God and the prophethood of our prophet?

The fact is that the Editor of Pakistan Times is jealous as to how a small poor and down—trodden Community been able to secure land for the constrnction of the mo que in Spain.

According to his editorial Allama Iqbal was given special permission by the Spanish authorities some half a century ago, to perform *Nawafil* at Qurtaba Mosque. Would one be justified to imply from it that the Allama was also an agent of the Christians? Certainly not. Then why should the Editor of

the Pakistan Times have two different yard sticks ?

The Ahmadis feel it a great honour and distinction for Pakistan that a Pakistani based Jamaat has been able to establish the first mosque in Spain after 500 years. We are certain that most of our Pakistani Muslim brethren are also proud and happy on the construction of this mosque. We pray that many more mosques be built by Muslim sects in Spain so that once again the call of the Unity of Allah and the messengership of Muhammad may be pronounced from every minaret of Spanish mosques.

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AN EVENTFUL JOURNEY

Hazrat Imam Jamaat Ahmadiyya left Rabwah on 26 h June, 1980 on his epoch—making tour of Europe, America and West Africa. He undertook this arduous journey to communicate to the people of the world the life-giving and eternal message of Islam and of the Holy Quran and to impress upon them the supermacy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

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Huzur set out on this eventful journey at 5 45 a.m. while a large number of Ahmadis had gathered at the Qasre Khilafat to bid him farewell. After leading a silent prayer Huzur along with his entourage and some officials of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya and other central organisations left Rabwah for Lahore where he had a brief sojourn at the residence of Ch. Hamid Nasrullah Khan, the Amir of Ahmadiyya Jamaat Lahore.

The entourage consisted of Hazrat Begum Sahiba, Sahibzada Mirza Anas Ahmad as his private secretary. Mr. Nasir Ahmad Khan Mr. Masud Ahmad as his Press Secretary and Mr. Lutfur Rahman Shakir. Sahibzada Mirza Farid Ahmad, vice president Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Markazia also accompanied him as the representative of Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. Ch. Anwar Hussain Sahib, the Amir of Ahmadiyya Jamaat of Sheikhupura District who was scheduled to leave on his own to visit some of the foreign Missions of the Jamaat on learning of the proposd tour of Huzur requested him to include him in the entourage as well.

Huzur along with entourage and some other distinguished members of the Jamaat left for Karachi by Pakistan International Airlines at 11 a.m. and arrived there at about 1 p.m. Where he was accorded a warm and tumulous reception by a large number of Ahmadis who had gathered at the airport to welcome

and receive their beloved spiritual leader. Ch. Ahmad Mukhtar, Amir Jamaat Ahmadiyya Karachi and the President of Lajnah Imaullah, Karachi greeted Huzur and Hazrat Begum Sahiba respectively.

Huzur in a cavalcade of Motorcars then left for Karachi Jamaat's guest house where Huzur put up for his brief stay of three days.

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During his sojourn in Karachi weather was mostly hot and humid. Nevertheless he remained busy all the time going through his mail. Huzur led the congregational prayers on the lawns of the guest house which were attended by scores of Ahmadis from far and wide to have the honour of the company of Huzur.

Unfortunately Huzur was enable to lead the Friday service and give the sermon at Masjid Ahmadiyya Martin Road as planned due to intense heat and being slightly indisposed. As such the Friday sermon was delivered and the service was taken by Ch. Ahmad Mukhtar, the Amir of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Karachi under Huzur's instructions.

28th June was the last day of Huzur's stay in Karachi. The weather was very unkind. It was hot, humid and sticky. As if it was not enough the power supply failed making the atmosphere unbearable. Evening brought some relief in the shape of rain and also resumption of the power supply. Eager as he always is, Huzur immediately came out in the lawns of the guest house, to meet his followers. He freely mixed with them and then addressed them for more than an hour. A gist of this thought-provoking address is as follows :

Huzur dwelt on the international status of the Jamaat and then apprised the audience with some of the problems that the Jamaat was confronted with as a result of its being international. "The community has now spread all over the world", said Huzur, "it was therefore natural that the problems were also of international type". Huzur continuing his theme said,

that one of the problems that the community was facing was the question of intermarriages of different nationalities and the resultant difficulties therefrom.

Elaborating the point further he gave an illustration of a girl of European or African descent who after being initiated into the Jamaat would naturally want to marry a Muslim boy whereas her non-Muslim parents would strongly oppose this marriage and would persuade her to marry a non-Muslim boy. On the other hand she according to Islamic jurisprudence must have a guardian who should give her away at the time of her marriage. Now the question would arise as to who should be her guardian? Her non Muslim parents could not be her guardians as they would be trying tooth and nail to stop such a union. In all such cases the Khalifa of the time would appoint someone capable of discharging the obligations of guardianship. To give this a practical shape the Missionary Incharge of a country who is also the representative of the Khalifa there would be given the powers of guardianship by the Khalifa of the time. Islamic teachings are very lucid, positive and natural on this point as they are on all other points. "I have therefore explained to you the practical solution of the problem and hope that this will now be quite clear in every Ahmadi's mind."

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Huzur further said that he had recently promulgated an educational scheme for the benefit of the Jamaat. This is a divinely inspired scheme and therefore of great importance to us all. I have started this scheme with a view to enable every Ahmadi to learn, understand and assimilate the teachings of the Holy Quran and also to be able to impart the divine knowledge of the Quran to others. In this connection I have demanded that every Ahmadi child should at least be educated up to the matriculatoin standard. This will enable them to understand and to lea n the Holy Quran. Unless one had firm foundation it was not possible to enjoy and fathom the deep teachings of the Holy Quran. The more one had a firm educational foundation

and background the more will one be able to understand and benefit from the divine knowledge of the Holy Quran. For the time being I have fixed the minimum qualification for an Ahmadi child to pass matriculation examination. With the passage of time and having successfully attained that object the minimum standa d of educational qualification for an Ahmadi child will be raised to passing Bachelor of Arts examination. There will be many stages through which we will have to pass while persuing this scheme.

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Huzur then showed his gratefulness to God for bestowing on the Jamaat His bounties in the shape of brilliant children. He cited the results of Sargodha Board Matriculation examination which showed that the two girls who stood second and third in the Board were both Ahmadis Huzur then emphasised the beneficial qualities of Soya Lecithin and asked members of the Jamaat to make it a part of their diet.

(To be continued)

A Few Verses from the Holy Quran*—IV

الم ـ ذالک الکتاب لا ریب فیه ـ هدی للمتقین الذین یؤمنون
بالغیب و یقیمون الصلوة و مما رزقنهم ینفقون و الذین یؤمنون
بما انزل الیک وما انزل من قبلک و بالاخرة هم یوقنون اولئک
علی هدی من ربهم و اولئک هم المفلحون ـ ان الذین کفروا
سواء علیهم أ انذرتهم ام لم تنذرهم لا یؤمنون ـ

I am Allah the All-Knowing. This is the Perfect Book, in that there is no doubt ; it is a guidance for the righteous, who believe in the unseen, observe Prayer, and spend out of whatsoever We have bestowed upon them ; and who believe in that which has been revealed to thee, and in that which was revealed before thee, and have firm faith in that which has been foretold and is yet to come. It is these who are firmly grounded in the guidance that has come from their Lord, and it is these who shall prosper. Those who have disbelieved it is the same whether thou warn them or warn them not, they will not believe. (2: 1-7)

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These verses follow a sequence which should be borne in mind. Righteousness has three aspects. The first is intellectual; this comprises faith. The second is practical ; as, for instance, the injunction to raise the Salat. Such Salat as is performed in the midst of doubts and distractions does not stand erect but is lying prone. The Quran does not direct that the Salat be read or recited, but requires that it be raised ; meaning that it should be duly performed in every respect. Remember everything has a purpose. If the purpose is not achieved it is vain and futile. A bullock purchased for the plough must fulfil that purpose. If it can do nothing but eat and drink it fails of its purpose and is fit only to be consigned to the slaughter house.

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*Continued from the November 1980, issue of the Review of Religions.

The purpose of the Salat is to establish communion between man and his Maker, so that through experience of it, by way of true dreams and visions, the worshipper may disengage himself from the world and strengthen his relationship with God, till at the end of the process he is united with God.

The root of the word *Salat* is *sali*, meaning to burn or to be roasted. Thus a burning is essential in Salat. Unless the heart is on fire there is no delight or ecstasy in Salat. It is necessary that Salat be performed with due regard to all its conditions; for unless so performed it is not Salat and does not serve the purpose of a yardstick for spiritual progress. The Salat combines words and gestures. The various stations of the Salat, that is to say, the posures progressively adopted during the Salat by the worshipper, are illustrative of the spirit of the Salat. The postures correspond to the verbal supplications made by the worshipper. The first postures is the *qiyam* (standing) during which the worshipper carries out glorification and praise of the Divine. Everyone recognizes that this is the appropriate posture for glorification and praise. Odes in praise of kings and dignitaries are recited standing. The physical posture is also indicative of the spiritual posture, as expressed in the words employed for the purpose.

True praise predicates the conviction that the subject of praise is truly praiseworthy. A worshipper can say *Alhamdolillahe* only if he is convinced that all perfect praise belongs to Allah alone. When the heart is convinced of this, then that is spiritual *qiyam* (standing in Salat).

In *ruku* (bowing) the worshipper proclaims: Holy is my Lord, the Most Great. A confession of someone's greatness induces bowing as a way of showing respect. The gesture is suited to the words.

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In *sajdah* (prostration) the worshipper proclaims: Holy is my Lord, the Most High. This confession demands a prostration, and again the words and gesture are co-ordinated.

In addition to the words and gestures, the soul must also join in the praise and glorification. The soul should stand in

praise and bow and prostrate itself in glorification in accompaniment to the homage of the tongue, mind and the body. The worshipper should not be satisfied till this co-ordination is achieved, for this is the meaning of raising up the Salat.

How may it be achieved? By holding fast to the Salat at the prescribed times, and not letting oneself be disturbed by doubts and distractions. In the early stages a struggle is unavoidable and the remedy is unrelenting steadfastness and continuing to seek help through prayer. Eventually the longed for co-ordination is achieved.

Salat is one part of the practical aspect of righteousness. The other is spending out of whatever God has bestowed. This is a very comprehensive expression. Not only belongings but the faculties and capacities and all that is acquired through them is included in it. Thus power, authority and all moral qualities are also part of that which God bestows. Not only is that one a miser who holds back money, but also one who has been granted knowledge or skill and is reluctant to share it and pass it on. If the reluctance to share is motivated by the fear of loss or reduction of income or of the esteem in which one is held, this is a kind of polytheism, as it implies that the knowledge or skill is the source of income or esteem and thus partakes of the divine.

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In the same way he who does not bring his moral qualities into play is also miser. Once he begins to do that others will start copying him and they will spread. These include not merely courtesy in talk and behaviour but all such qualities as courage, bravery, beneficence, chastity, etc. These are all moral qualities when exercised on the appropriate occasion. Even anger thus employed takes on the character of a moral quality. Always to turn the left cheek when the right is smitten is not a moral quality and lacks wisdom as it takes no account of the occasion of its exercise. Were that not done the Christian world would be reduced to a position of subordination as it would have to disband all forces and to destroy all armament. If anyone asked for a shirt, the cloak would

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also have to be yielded, and when asked to carry a burden for a mile, a Christian would have to carry it for two miles. All this would render them helpless and place them at the mercy of the non-Christians. The Christian missionaries proclaim this teaching with great eclat in street sermons but can offer no example. In truth this is not a moral quality. The use of a faculty on an appropriate occasion converts it into a moral quality. For instance if a person possesses particular understanding of a matter and a fellow being is in need of his advice concerning it, the former is under a moral obligation to help him with sincere advice. These are not small matters. Anyone in such a situation is under obligation to listen with attention and to render suitable assistance to him.

It may be said that spending only a portion savours of miserliness, the directive should have been to spend all. The Quran proceeds from the All-Wise, and wisdom means that which is appropriate to the purpose. The directive to spend a portion implies appropriatenss ; that is to say, the directive means spending according to the measure of the need, less when the need is filled with less, more when more is needed. For instance, forgiveness becomes a moral quality only when it is exercised with discretion. Offenders are of two types. Those whose default annoys or causes injury, but who deserve to be forgiven ; and those who, if they are forgiven, would become hardened. An honest and diligent servant may stumble when carrying food or drink and occasion loss and annoyance. He would deserve to be forgiven as he was not guilty of an intentional default. Forgiveness would make him more careful for the future. It would be foolish of the master to inflict punishment in such a case. But in the case of a servant who offends and causes loss out of a spirit of mischief or gross carelessness, true mercy would be reasonable chastisement. That is the wisdom underlying the directive : They spend out of that which We have bestowed upon them. Every believer has to determine for himself what would be appropriate. I have

pointed out that the teachings of the Quran follow a wise pattern. On the other hand the directive to turn the left cheek every time the right is smitten is idenfensible and impracticable. The gentlest and most venerable church dignitary cannot act in conformity with it. Thus the gospel is ignored and the Quran is acted upon. A poor, indigent old woman whose all is a piece of barley bread can, by sharing it, conform to the directive: They spend out of that which We bestowed upon them; while the most venerable priest may fail to turn the left cheek when the right is smitten. Indeed even Jesus Christ himself was found wanting. He should have delivered himself to his opponents before he was apprehended. Nor was there any need for him to pray that the cup be turned away If the very purpose of his advent was to atone for the sins of mankind by laying down his own life, as contended for by Christian apologists according to whom God could not forgive in any other way, he need not have even preached and admonished. He should have delivered himself for crucifixion at the outset.

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(Al-Hakam, Vol V, No. 13, 10 April 1901, pp. 2-4)

The teaching set out in the Quran shows that Allah is All-Wise and All-Knowing. His commandments are designed to develop human faculties and capacities to their perfection. They set up a perfect balance between forgiveness and retribution. There can be nothing better. Anyone who offers something different, seeks to disturb the divine order. In the matter of punishment it is obvious that some deserve to be forgiven and other must be chastised. All courts can function beneficently under the teachings of the Quran. Under the directive of the Gospel they would all have to be closed, and the result would be confusion.

The third aspect of righteousness is: They believe in that which has been revealed to thee. Man has to judge by evidence. He should not adopt a way that departs from true evidence. The way that is not supported by true evidence is perilous.

The way of righteousness is supported by true evidence in every age. For instance, you are in a strange land and enquire about the way. One person directs you one way, and ten honest, respectable persons direct you another way. Wisdom and righteousness demand that you should accept the direction given by the ten. Bear in mind that it is the Testimony of the pure that is worthy of acceptance the testimony of the wicked is not worthy of acceptence. This is the third aspect of righteousness. Those who depart from it are liable to go astray. Those who oppose me do so because they have abandoned this aspect of righteousness. (Al-Hakam, Vol. V, No. 14, 17 April 1901, p. 1)

Righteousness demands that when a person feels he is being drawn towards sin he should seek help throgh prayer and devising means of deliverance. The Quran says: Allah prepares a way of deliverance out of every difficulty for the righteous one, and provides for him whence he knows not (65, 3-4). A righteous one employs his reasoning faculty as far as is within his power. The Quran inculcates belief in the unseen at the very outset. This means that a righteos one does not insist upon taking his own way with God. They accept the unseen on the basis of reasonable probability. It is a mistake for a person to expect that every matter of belief should become as clear to him as the sun. Were that so there would be no merit in faith. Is there any merit in our saying we believe in the sun when it appears before our eyes in all its brilliance? Indeed not, for there is nothing unseen about it. But when we believe in God, the angels, the Judgement Day, etc., it is a matter of merit, for there are elements of the unseen about them. Belief and faith predicate elements of the unseen. The seeker after truth accepts them because of indications of truth concerning them.

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They spend out of that which We have bestowed upon them; means they spend in the cause of Allah out of whatever He has bestowed upon them, e.g. reason, intelligence, understanding, provision, property, etc. That is to say, they

strive by way of action and conduct also. Thus he who seeks through prayer and effort is righteous; as indicated in the Fatiha: Thee alone do we worship; and Thee alone do we beseech for help. Remember that he who does not seek with the full strength of all his faculties is not accounted a true seeker in the sight of Allah. Such a one tries Allah and is rejected. But if he strives and also prays, and happens to falter, Allah rescues him from the consequences of his default. But he who asks and does not strive is a laggard and is ignored by God. Abu Jahal had opportunities of visiting the Holy Prophet, but as he came only to find fault he was not blessed with faith. (Al-Badar, Vol. II, No 48, 24 December 1903, p. 384)

Guidance, in this context, is something much higher, which is an indication of the heights to which man can climb, and which can be achieved through constancy and steadfastness in the performance of these obligations. The first stage is faith in the unseen. But if faith does not go any further it is without profit. One must strive to achieve spiritual insight and observation which are bestowed, in due course, as a bounty by God, as the culmination of the first stage, when the seeker emerges from the stage of faith in the unseen to the experience of realty. He then sees God in this very life. Thus the believer in the unseen is promoted to the stage of observation and experience. (Al-Badar, Vol. VI, No. 3, 17 January, 1907, p. 12)

What is the distinction between Salat and prayer? The Holy Prophet has said: Salat is prayer; Salat is the essence of worship.

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When a person prays for mere mundane matters, that is not Salat, Salat is when the worshipper yearns after God and seeks His pleasure standing before Him in complete submission, humility, reverence and obsorption. The essence of prayer is that it establishes communion between man and God. It is prayer that is the means of approach to God, and safeguards a person against all that is vain and profitless. The main purpose of prayer should be to seek Allah's pleasure. Thereafter

one may supplicate in respect of ones mundane need also ; but this is permissible only because sometimes mundane difficulties begin to obstruct and intrude into spiritual matters, especially in the earlier stages of a seeker's progress towards his goal. The word *salat* imports the quality of burning. As fire burns, so should prayer start combustion. When the worshipper pursuing his supplication arrives as it were, at the door of death, that condition is Salat.

(Al-Badar Vol. I, No. 8, 25 May 1905, p. 4)

The Quran repeatedly enjoins the Salat, but remember also that the Quran condemns those worshippers who are ignorant of the true significance of the Salat and are miserly towards their brethren. The Salat is a supplication to be safeguarded by Allah against every kind of evil. Man suffers the anguish of separation from God and desires nearness to Him so that he may find that peace and security which spells salvation. But to this he cannot attain through any merit or skill of his own. He cannot approach until God summons ; he cannot become pure unless God purifies. How many intensely desire deliverance from a particular sin but no effort avails. Despite their aversion they sometimes succumb. This shows that God alone can rid a person of sin. It is not a mere matter of effort, though effort is indispensable. The Salat is the instrument for cleansing and purifying one who is in the grip of sin and has drifted away from God. The Salat washes out all evil, fills the sinner with pure emotions and restores him to nearness of God. This is the meaning of : Salat safeguards against indecencies and misbehaviour (29 : 46) The Salat is prayer born of burning anguish. It is called Salat because the worshipper supplicates in anguish that Allah of His grace may purify him of all evil designs and evil emotions and fill him with pure love of Himself.

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The word *salat* indicates that supplication and words are not enough, they must be accompanied by anguish, melting and emotion. Prayer does not find acceptance until the supplicant

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arrives at death's door. Prayer is hard and most people are unaware of its essence. So many write to me that they have prayed but without effect. In this manner they become guilty of thinking ill of Allah and they perish. They do not realize that prayer divorced from its essential conditions is no prayee at all. One of the essential conditions of prayer is that the heart should melt and the soul should pour itself out like water at the footstool of the Almighty in its anguish and agitation. Yet, the supplicant should not be hasty or impatient. He should continue his supplication with patience and steadfastness. It is to be hoped that such prayer may find acceptance.

The Salat is prayer of a very high type, but alas it is not so appreciated. All that is understood by it is the formal succession of postures and the parrot—like repetition of a few phrases, without full appreciation of their import. Another development has been that several new-fangled sects have abolished even the form of Salat and have substituted certain verbal formulae in its place. These are people who attack Islam and the commandments of Allah from the inside and seek to set up their own law in place of divine law which they discard. Keep in mind that we do not stand in need of any innovation in place of the great divine bounty the Salat. The Holy Prophet always had recourse to the Salat in the face of every trial and tribulation. Our own experience and the experience of the righteous who have passed away before us is that there is nothing so effective in leading a person to God as the Salat. When a worshipper stands in *qiyam* he adopts an attitude of respect and reverence like a slave who stands in humility before his master. The *ruku* (bowing) is also an attitude of reverence, and *sajdah* (prostration) is an attitude of extreme humility. When a person effaces himself completely he falls into prostration. Alas for these ignorant world worshippers who find fault with *ruku* and *sajdah* and who wish to revise the Salat. They are ignorant of the true significance of the postures of the Salat which possess many excellences. One who has no concept of the uni-

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verse from which the Salat has descended has nothing to stand on. He who is not able to recognize God can have no concept of the significance of the Salat which comprehends all good.

(Al-Badar, Vol. VI, No. 1-2, 10 January 1907, p. 2)

The Salat is the measure of the degree of piety of a person. He who sobs and weeps before his Lord in the Salat is secure and like a child in its mother's lap, savours the tenderness of Providence. He who does not find delight in the Salat has not a large share of faith. The Salat is not a physical drill. Some people go hurriedly through the postures and then sit long in prayer. But the Salat is the right time for prayer. Pray while in Salat, it is the best mode and means of prayer. (Al-Hakam, Vol IV, No 46, 24 December 1900, p. 1)

There is a certain restlessness in the Salat ; a worshipper stands, bows and prostrates himself and has to observe many directions One subject of all this is that one should train oneself to endure hardship for the sake of Allah. One could remember Allah and pray while sitting in one position, but He has ordained otherwise. The very word *salat* connotes burning. Until a worshipper sacrifices his comfort for the sake of Allah and his heart is in turmoil there is no meaning in his Salat. Some people are by nature incapable of feeling a paroxysm of that kind. Even these should be diligent in repentance and asking forgiveness lest they should become of those who are indifferent towards matters of faith and make the world their goal and purpose. The companions of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, performed the same Salat that you perform and derived great spiritual benefit from it and achieved high spiritual rank through it. The difference is only in the degree of sincerity and concentration. If you have the same degree of sincerity, devotion, fidelity and perseverance, you can achieve the same benefits from the Salat as did those before you. Be ever ready to suffer in the cause of Allah. No effort can avail unless it is inspired by sincerity and devotion.

There are many who make the covenant of bai'at, but

when they return home and encounter the least opposition or threat, they turn back. Such people hold their faith cheap. Call to mind the companions of the Holy Prophet. They laid down their lives cheerfully for the faith and were ever ready to sacrifice their all for the cause of Allah. They paid no heed to the enmity of their enemies. They were determined to endure everything to the end. But these turn back at the first rebuke. Their acts of worship also are mere husks. Their Salat do not reach Allah, but are rejected and condemned. The Quran says: Woe unto those who perform the Salat but are unmindful of it (107 : 5-6).

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Those who are not aware of the significance of the Salat only go through physical motions. Such people make one prostration to God and the next one to Mamoon. So long as a person does not endure hardships and calamities in the cause of Allah, he does not find acceptance with Allah. If a slave is faithful to his master in every trial and tribulation and holds fast to him in every situation of peril. he is no longer a slave but becomes a friend. The same is the case between God and His creature. If he does not let go of Him and holds fast to Him in every situation with steadfast fidelity. God too does not forsake him and deals with him as a friend. (Al-Hakam, Vol. XI, No. 36, 10 October 1907, pp. 11, 14)

Prayer attracts acceptance. It is the experience of millions and the reality has been made manifest to us also that prayer possesses a sort of magnetic power which attracts the grace and mercy of Allah. The essence and spirit of Salat also is the prayer that we have been thaught in the Fatiha. When we pray : Guide us along the right path ; we seek to draw the light that descends from God and illumines the hearts with love and faith. (Ayyam-us-Sulh, p. 12)

You should get up during the night and pray and supplicate for His grace. There are several occasions for prayer in the Salat, indeed there are such occasions in every posture. The

Salat is performed five times in twenty-four hours, and then there are Tahajjud (voluntary prayer before dawn) and Ashraq (voluntary prayer after sunrise). All these are occasions for prayer. Indeed prayer is the essence and spirit of the Salat, and prayer is in full accord with the divine law governing the universe. When a child cries for nourishment and is agitated, the mother hastens to offer it milk with great eagerness. There is a similar relationship between God and His creatures. When man falls with complete humility and in a state of utter helplessness as the threshold of the Almighty and submits his circumstances and supplicates for the fulfillment of his needs and yearnings, divine mercy is stirred and his prayer is accepted. The milk of Allah's grace and mercy also demands tears, and thus a supplicant should present a tearful eye to God. It is utterly wrong to imagine that tears and cries do not avail before Allah. He who thinks thus has no faith in Allah and His attributes of Power and Control. If faith had been cultivated such a notion would never have taken shape. Whenever anyone approaches Allah with true repentance he partakes of His grace. It has been truly said :

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What sort of lover is that who finds not favour with the Beloved ?

It is the torment of love that is lacking, master, not the Physician !

Allah desires that you should go to Him, but with a pure heart, putting yourselves in accord with Him and purifying yourselves. He has wonderful powers and His grace and bounty have no limit, but the eye of love is needed to behold them. Where there is true love God hears prayer and lends support, but sincere love is the condition. Love consumes and destroys all low passions and desires and transmutes the lover into a new and pure creature. He then sees that which he could not see before and hears that which he could not hear before. (Al-Hakam, Vol. IX, No. 11, 31 March 1905, p. 5)

A person who is a prey to doubts and distraction has a

defective personality. He is a slave to forms and ceremonies. His religious and secular life are both out of tune. Such a one performs the Salat, but knows not its purpose and does not realize what he is doing. He hurries through the Salat and then spends an hour mumbling prayers, not knowing that the Salat is all prayer and that its essence is prayer. The postures of the Salat help to induce the mood for prayer. This applies to all worship and indeed to all action. If one neglects the purpose and essence, everything is reduced to routine and formality. In the same way to observe the fast one must preserve the purity of the spirit to win the pleasure of Allah. Otherwise the fast is reduced to a formality.

(Al-Hakam, Vol VII, No 14, 17 April 1903, p. 2)

Once you recognize God, you will be perpetually in the state of Salat. It is a characteristic of human nature that once a person begins to like something he is continuously drawn to it. In the same way when you recognize God and are attracted by His beauty and beneficence, your heart will be drawn to Him and indifference will be converted into eagerness. The true Salat is that in which the worshipper sees God.

This life becomes worth while only when the intensity of enjoyment is experienced to a higher degree in prayer and supplication than in any other pursuit. Remember no one has control over life and death. Death may arrive by day or by night. Those who become so enamoured of life as if there is no death die unhappy, for they have failed to provide a treasure for themselves in the Hereafter which should be a source of joy for them there.

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What is the Salat? The Salat is supplication before the Lord of Honour without which man cannot survive nor find any peace or security. When God bestows His grace upon him he will enjoy true joy and happiness. From that moment he will find pleasure in the Salat and perform it with eagerness. He will then find the same joy and pleasure in weeping and

crying as he found before in delicious food. Even before he arrives at this stage in the Salat, he should persist in the performance of the Salat as he compels himself to take bitter medicine in the interest of his health. While he is in that condition he should supplicate: Lord, Thou seest how utterly blind I am. I am like the dead. I know that in a short while Thy call will come and I shall hie myself towards Thee none stopping me. But my heart is blind and unenlightened. Do Thou direct a shaft of light towards it that it may be lit up with love and eagerness for Thee. Do Thou, of Thy grace, so ordain, that I may be raised up seeing and not sightless, and may not be gathered up with the blind. If he persists in such application, a time will come when something will drop from heaven and convert his Salat into a deeply emotional experience. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VII, No. 1, 10 January 1903, p. 11)

The Salat deserves to be so called only when the supplicant has established a true and holy relationship with Allah and is so devoted in obedience to Allah and to seeking His pleasure and has cultivated such a degree of priority of religious values over worldly ones that he is ready to lay down his life in the cause of Allah When he arrives at that stage his Salat will become worthy of the name So long as he lacks this degree of sincerity and devotion his Salat and other acts of worship are but empty names.

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(Al Hakam, Vol. VIII, No 1, 10 January 1904, p. 3)

So long as a person is not wholly devoted to the concept of the Unity of God, the love and greatness of Islam are not established in his heart and he cannot experience ecstasy in the Salat. The crucial test is that so long as evil designs and unholy projects are not consumed, and humility and self-effacement do not replace vanity and the ego, a person cannot be accounted a true servant of God. For promoting perfect subordination, the best teacher and the most exalted means is the Salat. If you desire to establish true relationship and real communion with God, then hold fast to the Salat, so much so

that not only your tongue and your body, but also your soul and all its designs and emotions should be transmuted into Salat. (Al-Hakam, Vol. III, No. 13, 12 April 1899, p. 7)

The Salat is a mount that trasnports a creature to the Lord of the Universe. By its means a person arrives at a place where he cannot be carried by horses. Its fruits cannot be chased with arrows nor can its mysteries be portrayed by pens. He who holds fast to it arrives at the ultimate truth and reality, and reaches the Beloved hidden behind the curtains of the unseen, and is delivered from all doubt and distraction. His days are bright, his words are pearls his countenance is a full moon and his status is high. He who humbles himself before Allah in the Salat, Allah makes kings humble themselves before him, and makes this servant a master.

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(Ijazul-Masih, pp. 162 - 163)

The Salat is a source of joy, delight and ecstacy. But the manner in which it is commonly performed does not promote concentration only indifference and boredom. I have repeatedly admonished my followers to perform the Salat with full concentration so that that it may become a source of joy and delight for them. Most people perform the Salat hurriedly and then spend a lot of time in prayer, not knowing that the purpose of the Salat (which has been called the apotheosis of the believer) is to provide occasions for prayer.

(Al-Hakam, Vol. VI, No. 38, 24 October 1902, p 11)

I have often urged proper performance of the Salat, which should ensure concentration and eagerness. One has little choice during the congregational part of the Salat, but the non-congregational parts can be extended as one may desire. There should be weeping and shedding of tears so as to induce the mood which is appropriate to the Salat. The Salat removes all ills. As the Quran says : Surely, good removes evil (11 : 115). By good is here meant the Salat But today's performance of the Salat is such that a supplicant is looked upon as a rogue, for even the common people know

that God has condemned this kind of Salat which leads nowhere. I believe that if a person performs the Salat properly even for ten days his heart begins to be illumined. But one sees those who have performed the Salat over a period of fifty years whose concentration is on the life of this world and who do not know what they say in the Salat and what constitutes *istighfar* (asking forgiveness). The Salat and formality are things apart. The Sala is the surest way of approach to Allah. It is the key to achieving nearness to Allah. It is a means of the acceptance of prayer and promotes experience of true dreams, visions and revelation. But if it is not performed intelligen ly it is a mere formality

((Al-Hakam, Vol. VI, No. 38, 24 October 1902, pp. 11-12)

The Salat is obligatory on every Muslim. A tribe, on becoming Muslims, begged the Holy Prophet that they may be exempted from performance of the Salat as they were a pastoral people and had little time to spare from c ring for their cattle and for the same reason their clothes were often soiled. He replied that the Salat was essential. If there was no Salat nothing was left of religion.

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What is the Salat? To present one's weaknesses and helplessness humbly to Allah and to supplicate Him for help add succour. The supplicant at one time stands in humility before Allah to proclaim His greatness and in token of his own obedience, and dependence, and at another time falls down prostrate before Him in utter helplessness and submission and begs fulfillment of his needs. Like a beggar he recites the praises of the Master, and proclaiming His greatness and glory seeks to stir His mercy and be-seeches His grace. A faith that does not inculcate this is empty.

Man is ever in need of begging for His grace and of being shown the way of winning His pleasure, for nothing can be achieved without His granting the needed strength. Lord, grant us strength to become wholly Thine and to win Thy pleasure by doing Thy will. Salat means that the heart should

be filled with His love. His fear and His rememberance; and that is the whole of faith. Then he who desires exemption from the Salat what does he wish to achieve more than the beasts: food, drink and sleep? This is not faith, this is the way of denial and disbelief Truly, a breath taken in forgetfulness is a breath taken in disbelief The Quran enjoins: Keep Me, therefore, constantly in mind, I shall keep you in mind, and be grateful to Me and do not deny Me (2 : 153). This shows that neglecting the remembrance of Allah is a denial of Him.

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The five prescribed times for the Salat are but tokens. The heart should be ever occupied with the remembrance of Allah : standing, sitting, walking and lying down. To be ever steeped in His remembrance is a quality that entitles a person to be called human, and qualifies him to hope for God's grace and mercy. If one desires to reach a goal, one must travel towards it; the farther the goal, the faster, more diligent and longer is the effort needed to reach it. Reaching God is a goal, far and distant For him who desires to meet God and to be received in audience, the Salat is a fast conveyance. He who gives up the Salat, how shall he arrive?

Ever since the Muslims have neglected the performance of the Salat in peace of mind, with hearts full of love of God and full realisation of its import, the decline of the Muslims has set in. Reflect how glorious was the time when the Salat was performed with due care and attention. The greater part of the world then professed allegiance to Islam. Ever since the Muslims have given up that Salat, they have themselves been given up. It is the Salat that wells up from the anguish of the heart that pulls one out of every type of difficulty. It is my repeated experience in praying for deliverance from a difficult situation that while I am still in Salat God has resolved the difficulty.

What happens to the Salat? One supplicates, stretches forth his hands in entreaty, and the Other lends ear to the entreaty. Then it happens that He Who was listening speaks and responds to the one supplicating. That is the case of the one in Salat. His head is lowered in humble entreaty before his Lord, and he pours forth the tale of his miseries and tribulation. He tires not, nor is disheartened. Then true and genuine Salat brings the time when Allah speaks in response to His petitioner and gives him comfort. But that is not possible without true Salat. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VII, No. 12, 13 March 1903, pp. 7-8)

(To be continued)

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